United Nations E/2013/L.21

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
8 July 2013

Original: English

Substantive session of 2013
Geneva, 1-26 July 2013
Agenda item 6 (b)
Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits: review and coordination of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-President of the Council, Martin Sajdik (Austria), on the basis of informal consultations on draft resolution E/2013/L.10

Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration[1] and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,[2] adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011, and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 65/280 of 17 June 2011, in which the Assembly called upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Programme of Action,

Reaffirming the overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action of overcoming the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve the internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category,

Recalling its resolution 2012/26 of 27 July 2012 on the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,

Recalling also General Assembly resolutions 67/220 and 67/221 of 21 December 2012,

Emphasizing the need for coordinated implementation, coherent follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action, and noting the key role of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked

[1] *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chap. I.
[2] Ibid., chap. II.

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Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in this regard, as set out in paragraph 155 of the Programme of Action,

Recognizing that, over the years, the responsibilities of the Office of the High Representative have increased considerably in their scope and complexity,

Recalling the ministerial declaration adopted on ___ July 2013 at the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2013 on the theme "Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, in promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals",

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020;[3]

2. *Reaffirms* the commitment, made by the international community in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development,[4] to assist the least developed countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development, and also reaffirms the agreement to effectively implement the Istanbul Programme of Action[2] and to fully integrate its priority areas into the framework for action contained in the outcome document, the broader implementation of which will contribute to the overarching goal of the Programme of Action of enabling half the least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020;

3. *Expresses its concern* that the ongoing impact of the financial and economic crisis demonstrates the need for appropriate regional and international support to be deployed in a timely and targeted manner to complement the efforts of the least developed countries aimed at building resilience in the face of economic shocks and mitigating the effects of such shocks;

4. *Reaffirms* that building a critical mass of viable and competitive productive capacity in agriculture, manufacturing and services is essential if the least developed countries are to benefit from greater integration into the global economy, increase their resilience to shocks, sustain inclusive and equitable growth and eradicate poverty, achieve structural transformation and generate full and productive employment and decent work for all;

5. *Notes* the efforts made by the least developed countries towards full employment and decent work for all, expresses its concern that, despite considerable efforts, those countries are yet to generate a sufficient number of decent jobs for their growing working-age populations, including because of the structural constraints of their economies, and in this regard encourages further action by the least developed countries to strengthen productive capacities, as outlined in the Istanbul Programme of Action, and recalls the commitments made by the development partners in the Programme of Action to provide, inter alia, enhanced financial and technical support to the least developed countries to develop productive capacities, in order to support the efforts of the least developed countries to achieve structural transformation and generate full and productive employment and decent work for all;

[3] A/68/88-E/2013/81.

[4] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

6. *Recognizes* that least developed countries have made some progress on many of the goals and targets in the Istanbul Programme of Action, leading to structural change in a few of them, expresses its concern that most least developed countries continue to face pervasive poverty, serious structural impediments to growth, low levels of human development and high exposure to shocks and disasters, and also expresses its concern that the challenges presented by the global economic environment are putting at risk the hard-won gains achieved so far and the ability to expand those gains to all least developed countries;

7. *Welcomes* the progress made by many least developed countries in implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action, including by mainstreaming it into relevant planning documents and development strategies, calls upon the least developed countries, with the support of their development partners, to fulfil their commitments and to promote implementation of the Programme of Action, including by integrating its provisions into their national policies and development frameworks and conducting regular reviews with the full involvement of all key stakeholders, and in this regard invites the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, including United Nations regional and functional commissions, the United Nations resident coordinator system and the United Nations country teams to actively support the integration and the implementation of the Programme of Action;

8. *Also welcomes* the progress in, and stresses the importance of, mainstreaming the Istanbul Programme of Action into the development cooperation frameworks of development partners, and calls upon the development partners to further integrate the Istanbul Programme of Action into their respective national cooperation policy frameworks, programmes and activities, as appropriate, to ensure enhanced, predictable and targeted support to the least developed countries, as set out in the Istanbul Programme of Action, and the delivery of their commitments, and to consider appropriate measures to overcome shortfalls or shortcomings, if any;

9. *Invites* all organizations of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions and international and regional financial institutions, to contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, including by implementing enhanced substantive and technical assistance to the least developed countries in a timely manner, and to integrate it into their programmes of work, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates, and to participate fully in its review at the national, subregional, regional and global levels, and in this regard invites them to report on their contribution to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action as part of their annual reporting to their respective governing bodies;

10. *Expresses its concern* over the fall of official development assistance to least developed countries by 2 per cent in real terms in 2011 and its further decline subsequently, while noting that official development assistance continues to be the largest source of external financing for the development of least developed countries and plays an important role in their development, and that progress has been made during the past decade in increasing the flow of official development assistance to least developed countries, underlines that the fulfilment of all official development assistance commitments is crucial, including the commitments by many developed countries to achieving the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official

development assistance to developing countries by 2015, as well as the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance to the least developed countries, and urges developed countries that have not yet done so to fulfil their commitments for official development assistance to least developed countries;

11. *Welcomes* steps to improve the effectiveness and quality of aid in least developed countries, and underlines the need for enhancing the quality of aid to least developed countries by strengthening national ownership, alignment, harmonization, predictability, mutual accountability and transparency, and results orientation;

12. *Recalls* the commitment, contained in the Istanbul Programme of Action, that donor countries should review their official development assistance commitments in 2015 and consider further enhancing the resources for least developed countries;

13. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, their development partners, the United Nations system and all other actors to further intensify their efforts to fully and effectively implement the commitments that have been made in the Istanbul Programme of Action in its eight priority areas, namely, (a) productive capacity, (b) agriculture, food security and rural development, (c) trade, (d) commodities, (e) human and social development, (f) multiple crises and other emerging challenges, (g) mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity-building, and (h) good governance at all levels, in a coordinated, coherent and expeditious manner;

14. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, in cooperation with their development partners, to broaden their existing country review mechanisms, including those for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the implementation of poverty reduction strategy papers, common country assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, and the existing consultative mechanisms to cover the review of the Istanbul Programme of Action;

15. *Calls upon* the developing countries, guided by the spirit of solidarity and consistent with their capabilities, to provide support for the effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in mutually agreed areas of cooperation within the framework of South-South cooperation, which is a complement to, but not a substitute for, North-South cooperation;

16. *Invites* the private sector, civil society and foundations to contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in their respective areas of competence in line with the national priorities of the least developed countries;

17. *Welcomes with appreciation* the decisions taken by various entities of the United Nations system, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Entity for Gender

Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the World Food Programme, the World Intellectual Property Organization and the World Meteorological Organization, to mainstream the Istanbul Programme of Action and integrate its relevant provisions into their programmes of work, and in this regard reiterates its invitation to the governing bodies of all other United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to do the same in an expeditious manner, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates;

18. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to include the issues of concern to the least developed countries in all relevant reports in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, in order to support the implementation of the goals set out in the Istanbul Programme of Action;

19. *Underlines* the need to give particular attention to the issues and concerns of the least developed countries in all major United Nations conferences and processes;

20. *Recalls* the request made by the General Assembly to the Secretary-General to take the steps necessary to undertake a joint gap and capacity analysis on a priority basis by 2013, with the aim of establishing a technology bank and science, technology and innovation supporting mechanism dedicated to the least developed countries, building on existing international initiatives;

21. *Underlines* the need to ensure the mutual accountability of the least developed countries and their development partners for delivering the commitments undertaken under the Istanbul Programme of Action, and requests the Secretary-General to report on the follow-up to paragraph 145 of the Istanbul Programme of Action as regards the steps taken to ensure mutual accountability;

22. *Reaffirms its decision* to include in its annual ministerial review, in 2015, a review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action;

23. *Reiterates* that the Development Cooperation Forum should continue to take into consideration the Istanbul Programme of Action when it reviews the trends in international development cooperation, as well as policy coherence for development;

24. *Expresses its concern* that, although least developed countries have made some progress in social and human development, many of the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals have yet to be achieved, and calls upon the international community to give special priority to least developed countries in order to accelerate the progress in attaining the Millennium Development Goals in least developed countries by 2015;

25. *Strongly encourages* giving appropriate consideration to the special needs and development priorities of the least developed countries, including the eight priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action, such as productive capacity, in the processes devoted to the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda;

26. *Takes note* of the biennial reviews of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action undertaken by the relevant United Nations regional commissions in 2013, and invites them to continue to carry out such reviews in close coordination with the global-level and country-level follow-up processes and in cooperation with subregional and regional development banks and intergovernmental organizations;

27. *Notes with appreciation* that several least developed countries have expressed their intention to reach the status of graduation by 2020, invites them to start the preparations for their graduation and transition strategy, and requests all relevant entities of the United Nations system, in particular the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, to extend the necessary support in this regard;

28. *Recognizes* that the activities relating to least developed countries carried out within the United Nations Secretariat need to be further coordinated and consolidated in order to ensure effective monitoring and follow-up of the Istanbul Programme of Action led by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and to provide well-coordinated support for realizing the goal of enabling half of the least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020;

29. *Strongly encourages* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, major groups and other donors to contribute in a timely manner to the Trust Fund in support of the activities undertaken by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to support the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action, and the participation of representatives of the least developed countries in the annual review meeting on the implementation of the Programme of Action by the Council, as well as in other relevant forums, and in this regard expresses its appreciation to those countries that have made voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund;

30. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Council at its substantive session of 2014, under the sub-item entitled "Review and coordination of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020", a progress report on the implementation of the Programme of Action.